

A
S E R M O N
Preached in the
C A T H E D R A L
O F

St Peters in York.

On the Fifth day of Novemb. 1689.

By William Perse, M. A. Rector of West
Heslerton, and Chaplain to the Right
Honourable Lewis Earle of
Feverham.

Imprimatur,
Charles Palmer, Rmo. in Christo Patri,
ac Dno. Dno. Thomæ Archiep. Ebor.
à Sacris Domesticis.

York, Printed by John Bulkeley for Francis Hildyard
at the Bible in Stonegate. 1689.

Cy
5.22

2 H M O K

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

101 102 103 104 105 106 107 108 109 110 111 112 113 114 115 116 117 118 119 120 121 122 123 124 125 126 127 128 129 130 131 132 133 134 135 136 137 138 139 140 141 142 143 144 145 146 147 148 149 150 151 152 153 154 155 156 157 158 159 160 161 162 163 164 165 166 167 168 169 170 171 172 173 174 175 176 177 178 179 180 181 182 183 184 185 186 187 188 189 190 191 192 193 194 195 196 197 198 199 200

201 202 203 204 205 206 207 208 209 210 211 212 213 214 215 216 217 218 219 220 221 222 223 224 225 226 227 228 229 230 231 232 233 234 235 236 237 238 239 240 241 242 243 244 245 246 247 248 249 250 251 252 253 254 255 256 257 258 259 260 261 262 263 264 265 266 267 268 269 270 271 272 273 274 275 276 277 278 279 280 281 282 283 284 285 286 287 288 289 290 291 292 293 294 295 296 297 298 299 300

Pfal. 129. 1. 2. Verses,

*Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth
may Israel now say:*

*Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth;
yet they have not prevailed against me.*



AMongst the many undeniable and irrefragable arguments that may be brought to prove the Existence of God, the consideration of the great Care which He the Supreme Governor and Moderator of all things hath in all Ages taken to preserve his small Flock, *the Church*, from the Paw of the *Lyon* and the *Beare*; (notwithstanding all the Arts and Stratagems, all the force and cunning of her potent and vigilant Adversaries) seems to me not to be of the least moment to convince an *Atheist* of his impiety, a *Pagan* of his Infidelity, an *Heretick* of his Obstinacy, and a *Schismatick* of his dangerous and erroneous Opinions. For surely were there not a God in heaven that put a stop not only to the raging of the Sea, but the madness of the peo-

ple: were there not a God who set Limits to the Waves, and bounds to the fury of Tyrannical Oppressors; were there not a God who put a Hook into the Jaws of the great *Leviathans*: the spiritual Church had long since been like some of the material Churches in the low Countreys, quite under water: The Floods of Oppression had overflown her, and she had long ere this become a prey to those many Enemies which even from her infancy have Watch'd and Waited for her ruin and destruction. To see the Church like the *Salimander*, not only living in the fire of Afflictions but as it were receiving nourishment from the inoffensive Flames; to see the Holy Bush burning without any detriment to its own Instance; is a sufficient Argument that there is an Angel that Protects her, an invisible power that dwells within her; which preserves her body from scorching, though not always her Garments; her external Constitutions from the smell of the Fire: That such a small Vessel as the Church should Ride out so many blustering storms on a troublesome and tempestuous Sea, without bulging or leaking, without splitting on the Shelves, or being swallowed up of the Sands, must needs proceed from the skill and care of her indefatigable Pilot, and the strength of her invincible

vincible and irremovable Anchor : for what the Disciples said to Jesus when a sudden gust of Wind arose on the Lake, and filled the Ship with Water, *Help Master or we perish*, is most true of the Church in general : Were it not for his aid and assistance, for his continual presence, and express Commands, whom the Winds and Sea, and all boystroas and otherwise unruly passions obey, we should not only be tost to and fro with every wind of uncertain Doctrine and so become unseled in our Judgements, and Resolutions, but also we should suffer on the one side from Piratical Oppressors, and on the other from Heretical and Schismatical Intruders.

It had been impossible for Christianity, like Rome now the great Opposer of it, which from a few scattered Cottages came to be the sovereign Commandress of the whole known World, to have stretched out her Empire so far; and wide as it is at this day, and that from so low and small beginnings, had not the Divine Spirit carried her on and protected her, assisted and upheld her in spite of all opposition, and contradiction whatsoever : Turning some unto that Faith which they but lately persecuted, discovering the wicked designs and machinations of others, and confounding all their devices ; so
that

that diverse convers'd with *Lyens* without and danger, and play'd upon the hole of the *Ass*, and the Den of the *Cockatrice* in great security, as was foretold by the Prophet concerning the first days of the *Gospel*. God hath built his Church upon a Mountain that cannot be shaken, on a Rock that cannot be moved ; for though the rain descend, the Winds blow, and the Floods rise, though the Rain of adversity may wet her, and the Floods of persecution may rage against her, and the furious blasts of discord and dissention may ruffle and discompose her outward Garments, yet the Church her self shall not fall, nor her Faith totally fail, nor even the Gates of Hell prevail against her ; for she is founded upon a Rock, even the Rock Christ Jesus : he is her Saviour and deliverer, her Fortrefs and Castle of defence, under the shadow of whose Wings, under the coverture of whose gracious providence she shall be safe and secure till all Tyranny and Oppression, all rage and violence, all Envy and Malice be quite past and blown over : For though they have afflicted her from her youth may *Israel* now say, though many a time have they afflicted her from her youth, yet have they not prevailed against her.

From

From which Declaration of the royal Psalmist we may observe.

1. The inveterate Malice, and the unwearied Industry of the men of this world to ruine Sion, and to pull down the Walls of Jerusalem: *Many a time have they afflicted her from her youth; many a time will they afflict her in her old age.*

2. The Frustration of their design, or the ill success that all those meet with who strive to oppose the Truth by Violence, or to detain it in ungodliness by Fraud. *Yet have they not prevailed against me.*

3. The Retribution or return that the Church is bound to make, *Deo statore & liberatori*, to her Saviour and Deliverer, for the preservation of her self and the destruction of her Enemies: *May Israel now say, ought Israel now to say.*

The frequent Declarations of the Mercies and Deliverances we receive from the hand of God; is a sign of the value and estimation we put upon them, and the ready way to increase their number. The Remembrance of the Churches danger and of her wonderful deliverance from it must be the burden of her Song of Thanksgiving: For so the ingemination of my Text, as in other places seems to import.

In

In the first general Observation we are to consider 1. Who they are that are so malicious as to envy the peace of *Sion*, and so sedulous and diligent in contriving her Destruction.

2. How frequent they are in their Attempts.

3. By what ways and means they endeavour to bring their wicked and pernicious designs to pass.

And this I shall show in the Phrase and Language of my Text.

1. The Enemies of *Sion* are many. Their multitude renders them formidable : *Illos defendit Numerus junctæque Umbone Phalanges.*

2. Many a time do they renew their Assaults; Like importunate Beggars one or two denials will not shake them off; one or two, or twenty disappointments do not dishearten or cause them to desist from their enterprise: This but whets their anger and inventions: *Animos a Vulneribus sumunt*: Like *Anteus* they seem to receive vigour from their very falls. This shows their Obstinacy and inveteracy.

3. They have many ways to execute their Fury and to bring their hidden purposes to perfection. The Sword and the Mattock. open Force, and hidden Treachery: I might put in the Pen like
wise

wise none of the least invenom'd Weapons they make use of to accomplish their wicked designs : Besides a thousand little Arts they have to delude the Vulgar, and to hold silly ignorant people Captive this shows their Cunning. They do as *Balaam* did; at the request of *Balak* ; if they can- *Num.*
not curse *Israel* from one Hill, they will try a- *23. 13*
nother, and another after that, to see if at length some one lucky hit may render their Fascinations and Enchantments prosperous and successful.

1. The Enemies of the Church are many ; Too many for me to speak to within the compass allotted for this Exercise; too many for the poor Church by her own strength to encounter, but not too many for her Almighty Patron and invincible Champion to deliver her from : For though all the Legions of Darkness should combine in one against her , and call in all their Auxiliaries to their assistance, all those who for the Virulency of their Principles, and the maliciousness of their practice, may be stild Devils incarnate , yet should they be as chaffe before the wind, and the Angel of the Lord scattering them ; as the fire burneth the Wood, and the flame consumeth the Mountains, so shall God persecute them with his Tempest and make them afraid with his Storm. Though they come about

her like *Bees* yet shall they be extinct as the fire amongst *Thorns*, so suddenly shall they vanish and be no more. Though the *Red Dragon* open his mouth wide to devour her and her offspring, yet God will prepare a place in the *Wilderness* for them to retire unto: And though he follow her thither, yet he shall give her the wings of an *Eagle* that she may fly away and be at rest; and though the *Serpent* cast whole Floods of Water out of his mouth to overwhelm her, yet the *Earth* shall preserve her, by receiving them into her large and vast Treasury. As the *Air* before, so the *Earth* now, yea even all *Elements* shall by the direction and command of their Superior Agent, contribute to her security, and preservation. The Enemies of *Sion* are many: She may well say as *David* did in her person, *All nations have compassed me about, they have consulted together with one consent, and are confederate against me; the Tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites of Moab, and the Hagarens, those indeed who to our great trouble, (and the greater, because assisted by one who calls himself the most Christian King,) have overspread a considerable part of the once Christian Empire; Though the late prosperous successes of the Churches Arms make us to hope, that notwithstanding those indirect and*

unchristian practices, their late Half Moon is hastily declining to its utmost Waine. *Gabal* also and *Ammon*, and *Amalek*, the *Philistines* with the inhabitants of *Tyre*, *Assur*, also is joyned with them and have helpen the Children of *Lot*. The Enemies of *Sion* you see are many: The *Vineyard* which God hath planted for himself with his own right hand is infested, and troubled with many Adversaries that envy her Felicity, and endeavour her utter extirpation. There are wild *Boares* that break down her Hedges, and would lay her open, and make her common to the Beasts of the *Wide*, and unmanured *Wilderness*: And there are little *Foxes* that creep through them and crop her tender Budds: There are *Sacrilegious Caterpillars* that devour her fairest Clusters, her best and richest possessions: And there are *Teredines* little Creatures that worm themselves into the body of the *Vine*, and corrupt it, and others that gnaw at the very Root thinking to kill, and destroy it.

I shall passe by her Forreign Adversaries, *Atheists*, and *Infidels* who deny the very Principles and first Grounds of our most excellent Religion, whose Eyes the God of this World hath so blinded that they cannot see the wonders of Gods Love: and come to some of her domestick and
home

homebred Foes, those that eat of her Bread, and drink of her Cup, that partake of the same Ordinances, Communicate of the same Sacraments, that acknowledge the same faith, and yet either out of Pride or Ignorance, Folly or Contempt lift up their heel against her.

1. Some of those many Enemies of *Sion* that molest and disturb her are those who joyning with her in her outward worship, in the observation of her excellent Discipline, and the belief of her sound and Orthodox Doctrine, do notwithstanding to their own shame, and the Churches prejudice depart from her in their practice, and manner of outward conversation : whose lives are no ways answerable to that most holy Religion which they profess. *Qui aliud, aiunt, aliud vivunt.* That speak the words of *Simon Peter*, and live the life of *Simon Magnus*. And truly these are none of the least Enemies that the Church of Christ hath; for there are no wounds like the wounds of a Friend, they strike deepest and are most unkindly resented. Such as these give advantage to the Gainlayers of the Truth, and make them speak evil of that most innocent Gospel that is first pure, and then peaceable. Methinks I hear our blessed Saviour saying to the
fin-

sinning Christian that lives in direct opposition to those divine Precepts which he left to be the Rule and Guide of our Actions, something not unlike what the chaste and dying *Arria* said to her beloved *Patrus*.

Vultus Induens quod fecit non dolet inquit;

Sed quod tu facies hoc, mihi crede dolet.

The Wounds that the malicious and blood-thirsty *Jews* made in my Hands my Feet do not trouble me being they were given me for thy sake do procure an Attonement for thee: but they are those which thou my Friend and Companion whom I loved as my self, those which thou who art a part of me, a Member of my Body givest me with thy Blasphemies, with thy Oaths and Execrations, those are the Wounds that stab me to the heart, that crucifie me afresh, that put me anew to open shame. Pity it is that those who are right as to their understanding should be perverse in their Wills, and irregular in their Affections: That those who are so far inlightened in their minds should mix Heaven with Earth, light with Darkness, for what Fellowship or Communion is there between them. Oh! if there be any such here, let me beseech them by the Mercies of God, by the Bowels of Christ Jesus, not to Eclipse the Light of their Profession,

by

by the dull interposition of their carnal and Earthly desires.

2. Another sort of the Enemies of the Church, which do her and themselves no small prejudice, are those who by opposing her Doctrine, and separating from her Communion upon slight and frivolous pretences, do what in them selves to loose those Bands and Ligaments of Order that preserve her within the Terms and Limits of one entire Body and Society. What Opinion this sort of People, who out of an over nice and Curious Tenderness run from one extreme sometimes to another have, I know not; but this I think, that no rational unprejudiced person can altogether excuse them from giving Offence, and Scandal to the *Catholick Church of Christ*, whereof they either are or ought to be Members. If *Laceration*, if *Distortion*, if *Mutilation* bring pain, deformity and imperfection along with them, then sure I am that those who tear one Member from another, who divide the continuity of Christs Mystical Body, and cut off divers from the whole, must needs not only spoyle the Beauty and Comeliness of her who is the fairest of ten Thousand, but also bring torment and vexation, pains and diseases to the great and universal Congregation of the Faithful. These unnecessary, I may say scandalous Divi-

ons, are as the *Rickets* which hinder the growth of the *Church*, that impair her strength, and make her Limbs knotty and disproportioned.

3. The third, last, and most dangerous sort of those who afflict *Sion*, and seek her utter ruine and destruction that I shall mention, are those who either out of Ignorance, or secular Carnal self Interest, or both, corrupt her Doctrine, and either propose new, and unwarrantable Articles of Belief for the Terms of their Communion, and as the necessary conditions of Salvation; or else detain part of that which is necessary to be assented to, and practiced; from the knowledge of those who are subject to their Authority, and Ministerial Jurisdiction. These deliver the Inventions of Men instead of the Oracles of God, and impose uncertain Traditions instead of Divine Truths upon the overcredulous and easily seduced Multitude: God hath commanded the Governors and Stewards of his Church to prepare wholesome Pottage for the Sons of the *Prophets*; but they who have long, (though upon false grounds) pretended to be solely authorized; and commissioned for that Employment have gathered wild *Gourds*, venomous *Colloquintida* instead of savory Herbs, so that we are forced to cry out that there is Death in the Pot, there is no safety

in eating and drinking with them after a Religious manner, no Communicating with them in the *Sacrament* of the *Lords Supper* without danger of infection, till some *Flour*, which was *Elisba's* cure of the Deadly Pottage, be acknowledged to be in their *Host* ; which they (for Reasons best know to themselves) will not allow of. They have so poisoned and Corrupted the pure Streams of Gods Word, which should make glad the Church, which is the City of our God, that he that continueth to drink his fill of those putrified Waters without a special Antidote dyeth. Nay the *Jesuits* some of the greatest Emphyioners, and Sorcerers have turn'd them, as once the River *Nilo* was, into blood ; that is by their false comments and misinterpretations of the Sacred Writ they have extracted bloody and cruel Principles out of it. And by vertue of that unlimited, and uncontrollable Authority they would fallily fetch from thence, assume to themselves a power (which they have but too often used) of Dethroning Kings and Princes : and by dissolving the bands of *Allegiance*, expose them to the rage and fury of their own Subjects ; impudently denouncing the fatal Sentences of Deprivation and Destruction against those Sovereign and Anointed Heads, whose Authority is in those Sacred Volumes most
plainly

plainly asserted; and their Persons most expressly protected. To pass by that rabble of *Hereticks* that arose in the Primitive Times, (for the good Man had no sooner Sowne his Wheat but the evil one scatter'd his tares amongst it) the Church of *Rome* as infamous now for her Apostacy, as she was once Famous for her Faith, hath willfully incur'd the severe penalty mentioned by St. *John* in the *Revelations*, adding to and diminishing from the express word of God; nay some of her Communion have been so impudent as not only to corrupt several places of the Holy Scriptures, but even to Abase the value of that which they have left untainted and untoucht, Preferring their Canon Law, before the law of God, preferring the arbitrary constitutions of St. *Peters* pretended Successor to the undoubted and Divinely inspired writings of St. *Paul*: one instance of which I shall mention out of their own *Decretalls*: where it is said, *Secundam accipere uxorem Secundum Apostoli preceptum licitum est, Secundum vero veritatis rationem verè Fornicatio*. That is as much as to say, that according to the word of God in St. *Pauls* Epistles Second Marriages are lawfull, but according to the word of God, as they would have it in their Canon Law written 1200 years after, 'tis plain Fornication. St. *Paul* gives a command to *Timothy* to keep safe that committed to his Charge, to

C

pre-

preserve the Talent of *Catholick Faith* delivered to him unbroken, and uncorrupt, neither perverted or crackt in it's order by *Schismaticks*, nor tainted in it's Doctrine by *Hereticks*: but it seemes the Pope who so frequently and so easily, (though it may be not so cheaply) Dispensed with others, hath given himself a Dispensation from this Golden Rule: making such an unequall Exchange with us, as *Diomedes* in *Homer* made with *Glauces* for his Armour, brass for Gold: giving us brazen, impudent, counterfeit Traditions, for the Golden Armour of Gods word which admitts of no Dross, no Alloye.

2. As the Enemies of the Church are many, so are their Assaults frequent, their industry unwearied, and their malice still raging, though continually unsuecessfull. Like Couragious Gamsters, two or three unlucky Games cannot dishearten them, nay the more they loose, the eagerer they are thinking though in vain, that some one fortunate hit may make them amends, for their former disappointments, and answer their so often deluded expectations. It was a great comfort to *Israel* that though *Sisera* had nine hundred Chariots of Iron, and a vast Army with which he harast and oppress them for twenty years, that yet one overthrow given him by *Deborah* secured them from all such hostile Invasions.

sions for a long time after: But here it is as with the *Hydra*, cut off one head and two springs up in the place of it: Though divers of the heads of the adversaries of *Sion* have been fixt on Poles for their Treachery and Rebellion, to be a terror and warning to others to avoyd the same indirect Courses, least they meet with the same fatall end, yet there have been alwayes other Heads of the same Mould, and Figure, and are still busily plotting, and contriveing the downfall, and ruine of this poor Church of *England*, forsaken of those who should be her Friends, and exposed to those adversaries whose Designes is to Swallow both. And no wonder it is that these fiery Exhalations continue burning in their Malice for so many Ages together, seeing they have a plentiful Supply of unctuous, and Sulphureous matter from Hell it self which maintains the flames of Dissention which like the Fimerall pile of the two irreconcilable Brothers, *Ereoches*, and *Polinices* whose Enmity lasted longer then their breath, divide themselves, as also the more vehement fire of Persecution.

The Enemies of *Sion* are moved by a restless Spirit, even by him who is ever in action going too and fro about the Earth: and his chief business and designe is to disturb the Peace of *Sion* and

and to hinder the wellfare of *Jerusalem*; to pull down the old Temple of the Lord and to erect a new Chappel for his own Worship. From the infancy of Religion he began to persecute the holy Seed nor will he leave off to malign their happiness, and to create them trouble till this world be no more, and till they arrive at that unchangeable State of rest, and Security, which he being bound with his confederates in everlasting chains of darkness shall have no power though his perverse will shall still be the same, to disturb or molest. he seduced *Eve* in *Paradise* from the duty She owed to her Lord and Husband, and drew both of them from their Allegiance to their Supreme Head and Master: and thereby made them instrumentall to their own and our Misery: He instigated *Cain* to Sacrifice his innocent Brother, endeavouring thereby to destroy the Church in the first Marter and Confessor of it. Endless would it be, and indeed needless to run through the many oppositions that the chosen People of God met with by his sly, and cunning insinuations before their settlement in the promis'd Land: needless I say it would be to rehearse the severall hardships they underwent, in a Congregation of reformed *Protestants* to whom the free use of the Sacred History of the Bible is allowed in their own tongue, wherein the several particulars relating

lateing thereunto are contained. Were I indeed
 to Preach to an Assembly of Lay *Papists*, and had
 occasion to make use of any part of the Sacred
 writ, to give a demonstration of Gods care of his
 People under their most cruel and severe Task-
 masters, then it would be necessary to make a full,
 and perfect recitall of all the circumstances be-
 longing to such a deliverance; and that because
 their cunning and merciless Spiritual Guides as
 they call them, lock up the Records of *Eternal*
Truth from them, and keep them in ignorance of
 those wonderfull works of God which he hath
 done for his chosen Seed: it being in some of the
Catholick Countreyes as they are Stiled, a crime
 within the compals of the Inquisition for any laick
 to have a *Bible* in the Vulgar tongue in his custody:
 but to you it is given to know those truths that
 concern your everlasting Salvation; and if it be
 not your own or your Parents faults you may
 be able to understand the whole Series, and me-
 thod of Gods Mercies to his Church from the
 beginning of the world till the Revelation of *Jesus*
Christ; Happy are you if you know how to make
 a right use of this great Priviledge to your own
 advantage: I shall therefore be very brief, and
 that rather to refresh your Memories, then to
 inform your understandings. I shall not stand
 to reckon up the several *Depravations*, *Schismes*, and

persecutions that hapened to the Children of *Israel* under the several Dispensations of the Old Law untill the coming of our Saviour in the flesh: and then at the Entrance of the Captain of our Salvation on the great, and charitable work of our Redemption, Satan renews his Assaults, doubles his files, and again seeks to strangle Christianity in the very Cradle. He incites *Herod* to lay in wait for him, and what he could not accomplish by his Agents he attempts to perform in his own Person, after this he exposes him to the malice of the *Scribes* and *Pharises*, and at last when he thought his deligne finisht, he was vanquisht by the Cross, and the Death of *Jesus* prov'd the life of his Church: who knows not what Enemies, how powerfull, and how cruel the first Propagators of the Christian Religion met with from his bloody Instruments in the first Ages, and Centuries of the Church? how they were thrown to wild Beasts, devoted to the flames, Broy'd upon Gridireons, pounded in Mortars, and put to all the Torments that Mans malicious wit could invent, or his power execute: Afterwards when the Gospel of Grace, and Peace, had by its own innocent Arts and irresistible Charms, (the Divine Spirit working along with them) spread it self over a great part of the world, but then by degrees (as the best things here below are subject to

to corruption) became tainted with Errors, and overcast with Ignorance, and superstition, when a few (as most great things have small beginnings) to whom a light from above shined through the grosse and thick Mist, being sensible of their Errors, and willing to Forsake them, and to bring others likewise out of them; Endeavoured to reforme those dangerous, and damnable Corruptions which had (dureing that General state of darkness) crept into the Church; what opposition? what contradiction? what Persecution? did those first Reformers, and Assertors of the true Antient Catholick and Apostolick Faith meet with from those whom either incorrigible Obstinacy caused to persevere in their ignorance; or whom carnall Interest obliged to act contrary to those Principles of light, and Knowledge where with they were informed. I might run this from the beginning of our own Reformation down to these very days; and show you how the several Enemies of the Church have been still hammering and beating out Plots, and makeing Fetters from time to time to Shackle us again, and to reduce us to our former Slavery. No sooner had we through Gods providence escaped from the land of Darkness but the *Egyptians* as loth to loose so sweet and profitable a pray pursued us, useing all Arts, and means both force, and cunning, both threat

threatings, and temptations to bring us back to our old house of Bondage: But this will more properly belong to the third head: which was this.

3. As the Enemies of *Sion* are many, and their Assaults frequent, so they have many ways to accomplish, and bring about their Pernicious designs. They know that the same Stratagems in Warr are seldom twice us'd with good success: and therefore they vary their Arts, and change their Habits according to the times they live in, and the Persons with whom they have to deal. I might shew you here what little and yet destructive Arts some of the Enemies of our Church breed amongst our selves (doubtless deriving their small bye Streames from the corrupt and infected Fountain of *Rome*) use to undermine her Foundations, and by dissolving her Order endeavouring to subvert her very Constitution. But seeing the solemnity of this day, the happy day of our Deliverance from one of the most horrid Plots that ever was contriv'd against our Religion, and just upon the Brinke of Execution, seems to Point to me to direct my Discourse to that Party who were the cruel Instruments, and Abettors of that hellish Conspiracy, I shall wave those lesser Disturbers of our peace, and come to that open, and professed Enemy of our Religion as by Law Establisht amongst us: following

Following the method that *Gregory Nazianzene* does in his first *Invective* against *Julian*, who would not meddle, as he tells us in the beginning of his *Declamation*, with *Sehon* King of the *Amorites*, nor with *Og* King of *Basan*, small inconsiderable Princes; and who only endamag'd a little part of the Church *Israel*: but that he would direct his Arrows against that great Proud Spirit, that Dragon, that Apostate, that common Enemy, and disturber of Mankind. we will at present pass by those who do not Practice what they profess, though they are a great Dishonour to our Church; we will slip over in silence those who though in most Points they acknowledge her Doctrine, doe yet without any real grounds dissent from her Discipline, though this be an unknown injury and discredit to her, and as great an unhappiness to themselves, and come to this great Monster this red Dragon; red with the blood of the Saints, to this ungratefull Backslider of *Rome* who brings a disreputation on that once Famous Place where the Apostles of the Gentiles, and the great Minister of the Circumcision Preacht up that pure and sincere word of Truth, which is their at this time, and hath been for some ages so abominable adulterated, and corrupted: *Christ* gave *St. Peter* the Keys and commanded him to lay aside his Sword, but his pretended Successor hath beaten

D

them

them into two Swords a Temporall, and a Spirituall, with both which he Tyrannizeth over the Kings and Princes of the Earth, witness those Emperors he hath Excommunicated with the one, that so he might the sooner, and easier dispatch them with the other.

Should I recite the several Murders, and Massacres that the ferce Propugnators of the *Romish* interest have committed, that deluge of the blood of the *Saints* which they have spild and the cruel and Barbarous torments they have exposed them to, my Sermon must become a Martyrology, and these few Papers swell into a Volume: all History that runs parallel with their *Epoche* abounds with instances of their cruelty and violence: Neither are their own writers shy in relateing the great Slaughters they have made, and the many outrages they have committed for the propagation of their Religion, and the rooting this pestilent *Northwestern-Heretic* of ours as they call it out of the world: gloeing in their Villanies when Crowned with Victory and triumph, but disowning them when Abortive and unsuccessfull. And if this barefaced, and open way of proceeding will not serve their turns; if plain force will not prevaile, then in the next place they have recourse to hidden Arts, and secret Treachery: what they cannot compass in the open field, they endeavour to effect by Ambush, by drawing those lives they

they aime at into a snare under the pretence of a Treaty for accommodation: witness *John Hussie*, and *Hierome of Prague* both betray'd by the Emperours Letters of safe conduct into their Enemies hands, and then Sacrificed to their Zealous fury: so unsafe is it to put any confidence in them whose Sacred Principle it is not to keep their promise with them whom they are pleas'd to brand with the title of *Hereticks*. But more especially for ever be remembred the barbarous, and inhumane Massacre at *Paris* whither the chief of the Protestant party were decoy'd under the pretence of an accord, and there miserably Butcher'd. Sometimes they work under ground showing themselves thereby the Children of darkness, they conceal their intentions the better to bring them to perfection: We ought to bless God dayly for the many Seasonable Deliverances He hath at all times afforded us from the many Treacherous Designes which that restless party have contrived against the Persons of our *Princes*, and the Body of our Religion: but more particularly we have, as we ought, this Morning offer'd up the unbloudie Sacrifice of our Praise and thanksgiving in the name and the sense of our Church to our gracious and mercifull Preserver for the timely and happy discovery of that *Powder Plot* which was hatcht in Hell,

wrought

wrought in darkness, and should have been this Day executed in Clouds, and Pillars of Smoke: A Smoke like that which arose out of the bottomless pit, like the smoke of a Furnace; a smoke which would have Eclips'd our Sun and Moone; our King, and Prince: that would have darkned the Stars of the first Magnitude our Nobles; as likewise the lesser Constellations, the lower house of Parliament; and which is more, and which had been worse (though all was bad enough) a Smoke which had quite put out the Glorious Light of the Gospel, the very Eye, and Sight of this our most excellently Reformed Religion; and a smoke at last which like that ascending from the infernal Pit, would have brought whole Armies of Locusts, and Caterpillers, of Monks, and Fryers, of Priests and Jesuits, which would have devoured all that had been green, and pleasant, all that had been pure, and wholesome in this our fruitful Land, through this fire (for there is no smoke but hath some fire) they intended to have Sacrificed our Consciences to the *Moloch* of Rome; that cruell Idol that kills soonest those whome it embraces closest.

I need not give you a Relation of that wicked and pernicious designe; their late Practises, and contrivances to overturn the Foundation of our Religion hath sufficiently revived the memory of

of their ancient detestable conspiracies, and of this unparalleled one among the rest; so that now almost every Child is made acquainted with it, and the Fathers shall teach their Children as the Psalmist says upon the like occasion, *Psalm 78.* that their Posterity may know it; and the Children *4. 5. 6.* that are yet unborn, to the intent that when they come up they might see their Children the same *7.* and therefore I shall pass on to something else. These ways they have to offend their Enemies, other ways they have to gain Friends and to obtain Proselytes, one way is by speaking them fair with large Promises of Indulgence and Preferment: how many hath the hope of Liberty to do what they please upon easy termes of Absolution Seduced from the Truth, and caus'd them to make Shipwrack of their Payche? And as they have this way to gain them so they have another to retain them: false signes, lying wonders, and counterfeited Miracles: for certainly as the delusions of the Egyptian Sorcerers were in some measure a cause why Pharaoh was more perverse, and his heart more hardned against the Children of Israel, so the strong opinion that the vulgar have of the reality of those signes and wonders that are pretended to be wrought amongst them is a great reason of the continuation of their Spirituall Captivity

• **Captivity.** These wayes and several others they have to promote their cause, and make their worse then *Egyptian* Sorceryes to prevaile but to no purpose, for there is one in Heaven that laughs them to scorne; for as *Balaam* when *Nam.* Divinely inspired said: Surely there is no En-
 23. 23. chantment against *Jacob*; neither is there any Divination against *Israel*: according to this time shall it be sayd of *Jacob*, and of *Israel*, what hath God wrought? which makes good the next General I am to speak to which must be acceptable to all good men.

The Frustration of their designe: or the ill success which they meet with, that strive to oppose the Truth by violence, or detain it in ungodliness by fraud: yet have they not prevailed against me.

Many are the inventions of the wicked, many their Plots and Stratagems, many their devices, and subtle Machinations, but the Counsel of the Lord that shall stand! As Satan and his Instruments are restless Persecutors of the Saints; so is God a sure rescuer, and Preserver of them: Though the red Dragon call together all his
Rev. infernall Legions; all the Principalities, and
 12. 7. Powers of darkness, all the numerous host of the bottomless Pit; yet the victory shall remain with *Michael*: for indeed it is *Imper con-*
gressus,

gressus, a very unequal Match: nor although the Devil in Scripture be stiled the strong one, yet hath he to deal with a stronger then himselfe, with one who can when he pleases restrain his fury, and dispossesse him of all the advantageous Holds he hath gotten; and disappoint him and his Agents of their most forward and pregnant hopes even upon the Edge, and poine of their accomplishment. As the Enemies of *Sion* have many wayes, and many meanes to afflict her, so God hath many ways, and many means to protect and defend her. I cannot shew all the ways, and Methods which our Almighty Preserver makes use of to save and deliver his Chosen; because many of the Paths of his secret Providence are unknown to us; and past finding out: neither can I insist long upon those several wayes, that are discovered to us in holy writ, which his divine wisdom uses for their continuall Preservation: I shall instance in the two most comprehensive Methods I can think of and be as brief in them as I can.

1. The speciall Providence of God is wonderfully shewn in the singular Protection of his Servants from those dangers that arise from necessary causes, from such as act from their naturall inclinations, or at least ways without much premeditation or designe.

2. Hy

2. His infinite Love to his People is more Eminently discovered in the various Methods he takes to secure them from the mischiefs that are design'd them by voluntary Agents. But before I treat of either of these I must premise this by way of caution; That God does not allways make use of any peculiar providence for the preservation of his dearest Children either from dangers arising from necessary, or free Agents, and therefore we are not rashly to judge of all those who come to any Misfortune either from the one, or the other Cause. Sometimes he suffers his cheifest Favourits to be sawn asunder, to pass through the flames, and those of whom the world was not worthy to be stoned, and slain with the Sword; here in suffering the Malice of the wicked for some private end of his own to take it's naturall course, and to obtain it's designed Purpose; sometimes likewise he suffers his own Children to come to sudden, and as we call them untimely Ends; by some unforeseen, and therefore unavoideable accident; but chiefly and generally speaking God as I shall show you is pleas'd to give signall Evidences of his particular care of his own People, in preserving them from the many fatall dangers they are subiect to from the one and the many bloudy contrivances that threaten them from the other Cause.

Gods

Gods care is remarkable in the preservation of his Servants from dangers arising from natural Causes: He oftentimes for the Safeguard and Protection of his People either restrains the violence and Malignity of them, or else alters, or suspends their Property: Thus he restrain'd the consuming nature of the fire in the over heat Furnace into which the three Children, (the bold opposers of *Idolaty* to the Kings face) were cast, So that they walked unconcernedly in it, as though they had only been surrounded with a harmless *Lambent* flame. Thus the viper that fastned on St. Pauls hand by the wonderfull Providence of God, (whose first motions all natural Agents must needs obey) had lost its innate venome, which was turned into an innocent juyce: and this is one of the promises which our blessed Saviour made, to his Disciples a little before his Ascension mentioned by St. *Marke*: They shall take up Serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them. we are told by *Job* that the stones of the field shall be in League with the *Righteous*, and that the beasts of the field should be at peace with him. Thus God shut the Mouths of the Lyons, and took away their ravenous appetite, to preserve his Servant *Daniell*, whose onely crime was his Devotion, his not daring to offer up

Mark.
16. 18.

Job. 5.
27.

any Petition but to his God only. and we know that the stones which the people of *Lystra* (the same persons whome *St Paul* had lately before
Acts 14 19. Restrain'd with much ado from Idolatry.) threw at that great *Apostle*, were more favourable to him then the hard hearts of the misguided rabble; Thus the fire shall not burn, nor the viper sting, nor the Lyons devour, nor the stones kill, nor the Oyle Scald, (*St Johns* deliverance at *Patmos*) when God is pleas'd to appear for the security and Preservation of those who stand up in opposition to Idolatry and Superstition in defence of his own true worship.

2. The speciall Providence of God is most Eminently discovered in the severall methods he takes to secure them from the violence intended them by voluntary Agens. And this God does sometimes by turning the hearts of those who wish evil unto *Sion* into a friendly complianc with her. thus he protected his servant *Isaiah* twice in the same journey, when *Daban* persued him; and his incensed Brother *Esau* went forth to meet him. Sometimes by turning the fury and violence of the enemies upon themselves: Thus the warr between the *Turks*, and the *Persian* was for a long time the Safeguard, and preservation of the Christians in *Hungary*: and often times the jealousies and

and contests amongst the several Sects of the Mahometans have diverted the arms of those Infidells, or recalled them from the advantages they had gained by their vast multitudes: sometimes God is pleas'd to send Panick fears, and general consternations amongst the Enemies of Sion, thereby making them afraid of their own shadows, and causing them to fly when there is none to pursue. Thus he made the Syrians to ^{Kings} here the noise of Chariots and Horses, even as ^{2 book} the noise of a great host, and they arose and fled, ^{7. 6.} and left all their Furniture and provision behind them to the great comfort of the almost starv'd Samaritans. At other times he preserves his Servants by discovering the counsells, and revealing the designs of those that seek their destruction: thus God by the Prophet *Elisha* discovered the secret Cabinet Counsells of the King of Syria, by which means the King of Israel saved himself: otherwhile he smites them with blindness, as he did the great host that came to intrap the Prophet *Elisha* and takes them in the same snare they layd for others. Sometimes he insatuates their Counsells, making them thereby instrumentall to the preservation of those whom they had markt out for destruction: Thus the writing of an ambiguous Letter to the Lord Mount-eagle to diswade him from coming to the House
that

that day was a Secondary means of preventing that bloody, and horrid designe which should on this day have been executed, and for the happy discovery whereof we have this Morning paid our gratefull acknowledgment to our Mercifull Saviour and Deliverer.

And as God hath many ways so he hath many means to protect his Chosen, and to suppress either the force or to defeat the cunning of their Adversaries: As his Angels, his Ministering Spirits sent abroad continually for the good of his Elect: witness *Sennacheribs* vast army destroyd in one night by them: his Magistrates which are the Shields of the Earth, and his Ministers which are the Chariots and horsemen of *Israel*. But in all these we must look up to God, the first Mover of the wheel and return our Praise and thanksgiving to him, to whom it alone belongs, which brings me to the last head The duty of the Church; the thankfull retribution she is bound to make to her great Champion, and Defender of all her deliverances: may *Israel* now say. The remembrance of her past dangers ought to be the Burden of her Song of thanksgiving: as the Reduplication in the Text, and in other places of the *Psalms* seem to import Not unto us, nor unto us O Lord but unto thy Name be glory; they compassed me about,

about, they compassed me. I say about, but in the Name of the Lord I will destroy them. All the redoublings almost that we meet with are but so many repetitions of Gods favour, and Mercies, whereby we are the more effectually and strongly stir'd up to a chearfull thankfullness to him who is the Giver of all victory and the only Preserver of all those that fear him, and put their trust in his mercy.

A gratefull acknowledgment of Benefits received is one of the first Principles and common notions we bring into the world along with us: neither have we only the indelible and indispensable Law of Nature to commend this duty of gratitude to us, but the positive command of God himself to inforce the commemoration of either particular or national deliverances, under no less apenalty then the absolute forfeitnre of them: God will by no means admit that his mercies should be writ in Sand to be wash'd away by the next coming in of the Tyde; but that they should be recorded in such lasting Characters that may transmit them to succeeding generations. He commanded a Pot of Manna to be preserved in his Tabernacle to testifie to after ages that miraculous Providence whereby he sustained the Children of *Israel* for forty years in the dry and barren Wilderness: And when
the

the waters of *Jordan* were dryd up to afford an easie passage to that vast army into the promis'd Land, we find that *Joshua* erected 12 stones in the place where the waters were cut off, to be a perpetuall Memoriall of that wonderous separation: Nay we are told that in the same place where they past over the *Red Sea*, the Print, and Footsteps of that Stupendious March, May be seen to this day, as a lasting Monument of that Miraculous Preservation: I shall not stand to justifie the truth of that bold and seemingly improbable relation; but sure I am that the signall steps, and prints of this days wonderfull deliverance remain fresh in this Nation to this present time, for though many noble, and Eminent neighbouring Structures have since (not without suspition of indirect contrivances from the same cruell hands) felt the fury of the merciless Flames: yet those ancient, and glorious Piles of building at *Westminster*, where the Plot was layd, where the scene was contriv'd, and which were designed, for one common heap of rubbish, stand hitherto as a monument of our Churches triumph, and their shame, and at once bid defiance to the jaws of Time, and their inveterate Malice.

Let

Let not therefore the complicated Blessings which by the happy discovery of this days horrid Treasons descended upon this Nation be blotted out of our remembrance so long as we wish well to the *English* Monarchy or to the Protestant Religion; for to this days Triumph we owe the Preservation of both.

Nay least the remembrance of those Miraculous Deliverances that God hath bestowed upon this Kingdome by snatching it out of the bloody Jaws of Popery should ever be forgotten by us; he hath been graciously pleas'd, as it were to refresh our Memories, and to reprint the Characters of his goodness to be continued to our Posterity, to signalize once more the same day of the same Month, and the same date of the year with fresh instances of his gracious Providence over us, and his singular protection of us, and our most excellent Religion. Making 88 in this wonderfull Century, and the now twice happy fifth of *November*, (the glorious day of his present Sacred Majesties Arrivall in *England*, for the Preservation of our Liberties and Religion) the joyfull Seasons once more of our deliverance from that fearfull inundation of Popery that was ready to break in upon us.

Let

Let us therefore offer unto God our Protector, and Preserver a double Tribute of thankfullness for the joynt Deliverances vouchsaf'd to us, and our fore Fathers on this Solemn Festivall, which deserves to be mark't with a new Star, and colour'd with a fresh, and richer graine in our *English* Calender.

Deliverances by which we are rescued from being carried back to our old abandon'd *Egypt* of Idolatry, and Superstition. Mercies to which we owe the continuance of many noble Families which otherwise had been blown up without any Luxury or Prodigality of their own: and lastly Mercies to which we must ascribe the free Exercise of our Religion, and our meeting together in this venerable, and Agust Place appointed for Gods holy Worship; (a place to which that Party were lately too near Neighbours, and which they lookt upon with too greedy an Eye) whereby we have this opportunity of Magnificing that gracious Providence which counterminde all their hellish Plots in both the Miraculous Revolutions.

And let us show our Gratitude to Almighty God on this great occasion chiefly by wishing well unto *Sion*, and doing the things that may conduce to her Peace.

Let

Let us not be accessory to our own Misfortunes in calling down judgements from Heaven, in removing those Golden Candlesticks which are yet, God be praised, (and long may they continue so) fixt in our Sanctuaries either by the wickedness of our lives, or the viciousness of our Principles. Let there be no Divisions among us, the fomenting of which is the ready way to blast, and sully those extraordinary blessings which we at present enjoy; and which an unanimous conformity to the most pure and excellent rules and Discipline of our Church, is the most likely, and prudentiall way to confirme to our further Benefit, and advantage. Let those who upon slight, and triviall Grounds separate from our Communion consider seriously with themselves, who they were, that have ever since the Reformation been the stout opposers of Popery, and who they now are which appear as the resolute Champions of the Protestant Religion against all its Enemies whatsoever. And then let them be ashamed to stand out any longer against them, who have alwayes stood in the Gap to Defend them, and the Faith which they Profess.

Let them all run into the Arms of our common Mother the Church of England, and rest

assured that they cannot but be safe unde her Shelter whom God hath so miraculously restored, and preserved: And let all acquiesce in the wise, and the sober determinations of those Reverend, and pious Compilers of the most excellent form of her *Discipline* which as well as her *Doctrine*, some of them seald, and confirm'd with their best blood: For we may assure our selves of this Truth, that as a Church over burden'd with a multitude of *Ceremonies* is like a Bird with great Wings, many gay Feathers, and a small light, empty useles Body; So that Church (if we may call it one) that despises all outward Decency, and Order, is like the unphum'd Jay in the Fable, a trouble to her self, and laughing stock to her Neighbours.

Lastly let us endeavour to be Sober in our Judgements, prudent in our Conversation; putting on a calme, meek, obedient, teachable Temper; not affecting singularity, but agreeing as in one Faith, one Hope, one Baptisme, in the acknowledgement of one Lord, and Saviour of us all: So likewise in one outward form of worship, even that Incomperable one which is so happily (and long may it be so) Establish'd by Law among us.

And

And let Us, bless and Praise God for all his Mercies ; and then God shall bless us, and continue this most excellent Religion which we profess, and enjoy, in spite of all it's Ad-versaries, and Opposers whatsoever, to us, and our Posterity for many and many Generations ; till all Churches shall be gathered into one, and united to their Supreme head Christ Jesus our blessed Sa-viour, and Deli-verer, to whom with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, three Persons, and one God be ascribed all Power, Praise, Honour, and Glory for ever and ever, Amen.

FINIS.